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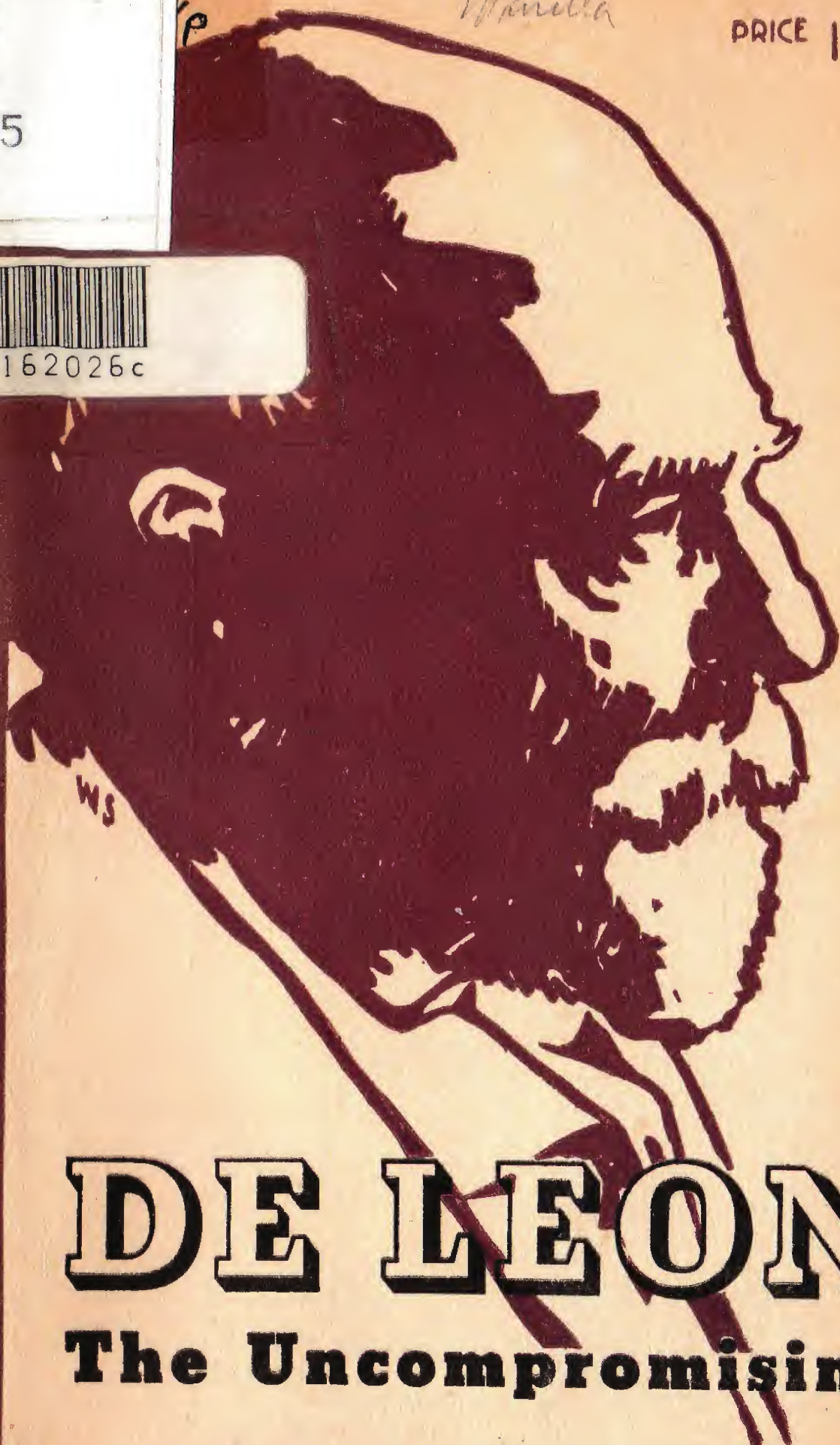


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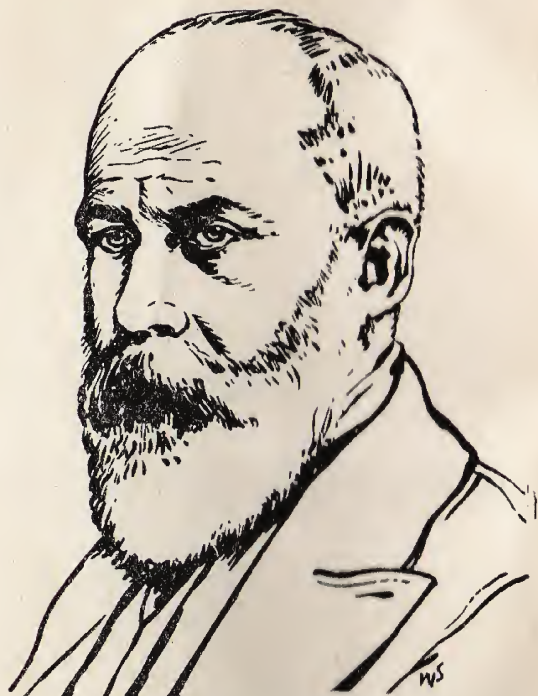
SOCIALIST LABOR



DE LEON

The Uncompromising

BY ARNOLD PETERSEN



Drawn by Walter Steinhilber.

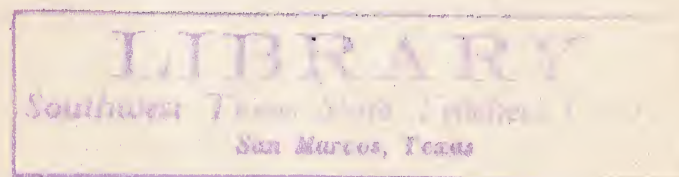
De Leon

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THE UNCOMPROMISING

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"No compromise—no political trading."
—Wilhelm Liebknecht.



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De Leon the Uncompromising

I.

We are gathered here this evening to honor, and to commemorate the birth of one of America's immortal geniuses. In honoring Daniel De Leon, great original thinker, and independent discoverer in the field of sociology, we are, however, not merely paying homage to a genius, but we are at the same time rendering tribute to a lofty and enduring principle which is inseparably associated with the name of De Leon, the principle that it is possible—aye, the only thing practicable!—so to organize society, and reconstitute government, as to insure true freedom for all on the basis of abundance for all—that is to say, superabundance for the earth's teeming millions and universal peace, with freedom from class rule, freedom from dependence of one class upon another, and, above all, insuring achievement of that emancipation from the ego which Marx had in mind when he said that when the individual worker "cooperates systematically with others, he strips off the *fetters* of his individuality, and develops the capabilities of his species."

When we say that De Leon was one of America's great geniuses, we mean just that. Many attempts have been made to define genius, but none has been wholly successful for the reason that genius partakes of the universal, and the universal cannot be catalogued or indexed. We are told, for instance, that "genius is not a single power, but a combination of great powers." That is certainly true, and it unquestionably applies to

De Leon. It has also been said that "genius does what it *must*; talent does what it *can*." I think that is as true as the other, and certainly true of De Leon who was so entirely possessed of an idea, of a scientific truth, that he gave himself completely to it, never asking: "*Can* I do this," but rather saying to himself: "I *must* do this." Someone, rather facetiously, has observed that "genius may be almost defined as the faculty of acquiring poverty." Unhappily for the worldly comforts of himself and family, that can also be said to be true in De Leon's case—with a qualification. For De Leon's material poverty was not so much the result of exercising a faculty, of course, as it was the inevitable result of De Leon's unsparing devotion to the cause of the proletariat, his utter inability and refusal to accept any compromise of principle, concerning which we shall hear more later.

The talented French woman writer, Georges Sand, said that "the life of great geniuses is nothing but a sublime storm." If we delete the word "nothing," all who knew De Leon will agree that the statement fits his life. De Leon's life was a stormy one—indeed he himself was the storm center in what politely has been designated the American labor movement, from the time he entered it in the eighties to the year of his death on the eve of the first great World War. With biting satire Dean Swift said: "When a true genius appears in the world you may know him by this sign that the dunces are all in confederacy against him." Look over the list of those who fought De Leon, and what do we find? As cheap and vulgar a crowd of mediocrities and swindlers as ever adorned the roster of any bourgeois institution (be it a Rotary club, a Chamber of Commerce, or a Congressional investigation commit-

tee), from the intellectual mountebanks and charlatans of the "Socialist" party, the Hillquits, Cahans, Ghents, up or down to the loudest sneering plutocratic college professor or editor!

By reason of his great achievements, and in the light of all these definitions or explanations, which so peculiarly apply to De Leon, we are justified in hailing De Leon as a genius. But if it be asked: "Why is it, since De Leon was such a genius, that he is so little spoken of today outside Socialist circles? Why are his principles of working class emancipation so little known even to the class so vitally concerned in them?" Well, one answer would be that De Leon and his works are "kept out of circulation" (except by the S.L.P.) for the same reason that dynamite is kept out of circulation! A tribute is paid to the potency of dynamite in the fact that no one cares to be carrying it around, or playing with it! A tribute is paid the potency of De Leon's genius in the fact that no supporter of capitalism or capitalist principles cares to bandy his name, or associate himself with his principles and teachings. Plutocratic interests delight in playing with, that is, advertising, the reform nostrums of the Hillquits, Bergers, Thomases, Browders, etc. The standing order in the plutocratic halls of "learning," in the editorial sanctums, and in the capitalist pulpits, is: "Play down De Leon and the Socialist Labor Party. Do not, if you value your jobs, mention them except (on rare occasions) with sneers and distortions. But play up, boost all you like, the reform gentry of the 'Socialist' party, the Communist party, and similar groups upholding the principle that our present system *can* and *must* be mended and preserved!" The sneers and conspiracy of silence directed against De Leon were directed also

against Marx, Engels and Morgan in their day. Indeed, the epithets hurled at De Leon were, with but slight variations, the same that were hurled against Marx. This is true to such an extent that if we were to cull the epithets and sneers directed against Marx and De Leon, respectively, and make separate lists of them without revealing whether reference is made to the one or the other, it would be quite impossible to tell which is which!

And so, there is indeed nothing strange in the fact that at the present stage De Leon's name is spoken of in bourgeois circles in whispers only, if mentioned at all. De Leon recognized, of course, the fact of this conspiracy of silence, and fully understood the reason for it. But however much he resented the parading of the charlatans and swindlers in the "Socialist" party as Socialists, he was generally unconcerned about his own fame, refusing at any rate to stoop to the cheap methods of self-advertising employed by the vulgar and money-grabbing and office-hunting S.P. politicians. He might well have said what the great Kepler is reported to have said after he had made his discovery of the principle underlying the motions of the planets: "Whether my discoveries will be read by posterity or by my contemporaries is a matter that concerns them more than me. I may well be contented to wait one century for a reader, when God Himself, during so many thousand years, has waited for an observer like myself!"

II.

The genius of De Leon, then, had many facets or manifestations, but the one we are most interested in tonight—if, indeed, it is possible to separate it from the rest—is his unyielding insistence on principle, his

utter refusal to compromise principle. Visionaries, fakers and careerists, men without anchor or compass, drifting with the winds and the tides, are unable to understand a nature so uncompromising as that of De Leon. And because they were unable to understand it, or because acknowledgment of understanding would have compelled them either to fall in line with him, or stand exposed without pretense as swindlers, they constructed elaborate theories, or alibis, to justify their compromising tactics and opportunistic course. And part of their defense mechanism consisted in calling De Leon a fanatic, a sectarian—one who was too impatient and who would not accept half a loaf but insisted on the whole loaf or none; who was far in advance of the mass, unwilling to have them catch up with him, and unwilling to descend to the level of the mass; and much more in a similar vein. But all these charges, and many more, are the identical ones hurled at every revolutionary movement in history. In our own American history we find an amazingly close parallel in the case of the Abolition Movement. The great Abolitionist, Wendell Phillips, replied to a condescending British critic (one "Ion") in words that we of the Socialist Labor Party might use today against the critics and traducers of De Leon and the S.L.P.:

"'Ion's' charges are the old ones, that we Abolitionists are hurting our own cause,—that, instead of waiting for the community to come up to our views, and endeavoring to remove prejudice and enlighten ignorance by patient explanation and fair argument, we fall at once, like children, to abusing everything and everybody,—that we imagine zeal will supply the place of common sense,—that we have never shown

any sagacity in adapting our means to our ends, have never studied the national character, or attempted to make use of the materials which lay all about us to influence public opinion, but by blind, childish, obstinate fury and indiscriminate denunciation, have become 'honestly impotent, and conscientious hindrances.' "

How familiar! Can we not detect in these words the identical criticism of De Leon and the S.L.P. by the petty compromising and opportunistic politicians—by the Bergers, Hillquits, Thomases and the ridiculous Browders? De Leon stood apart from the mass, they say! Certainly, exactly as Garrison stood apart from the chattel slaves! But—Garrison was right and his principles conquered, *and chattel slavery was destroyed*. De Leon was abusive, he indulged in "obstinate fury and indiscriminate denunciation," he was "impotent" and an "academic doctrinaire," they say! Indeed he was, just as Wendell Phillips was, "abusive," "obstinate" and an "academic doctrinaire"! But—Wendell Phillips was right, his uncompromising principles were in the end victorious, when all others suffered defeat. *And chattel slavery was destroyed!* De Leon was too far in advance—he was a general without an army, they say! Sure, precisely as the Abolitionists generally were said to be too far in advance. But—the Abolitionists were right, they were finally vindicated, *and chattel slavery was destroyed*. The majority were, in fact, treading fast upon the heels of the Abolitionists (even as the workers are beginning to tread upon the heels of the S.L.P. revolutionists), and it was presently seen that it was their critics who were trailing behind. For these critics were, for the greater part, "practical politicians," and, as Buckle told us, it is the practice of politicians

to be behind the age and not to lead it! And so, it was, in fact, the uncompromising De Leon who was in close touch with "the mass," that is, the working class, and with the spirit and truth of the age, while his enemies and critics trail far behind, and actually stand apart from "the mass"! And, through De Leonism, *wage slavery will be destroyed!*

In further answer to the critic of the Abolitionists, Wendell Phillips repeated: "These, Sir, are the charges which have uniformly been brought against all reformers in all ages." When we are told that De Leon and the S.L.P. indulge in abusive arguments and the use of invectives, the ghosts of the past rise, and through the somber corridors of time, words come echoing to us such as those Wendell Phillips uttered in 1853:

"The charges to which I refer are these: that, in dealing with slaveholders and their apologists, we indulge in fierce denunciations, instead of appealing to their reason and common sense by plain statements and fair argument;—that we might have won the sympathies and support of the nation, if we would have submitted to argue this question with a manly patience; but, instead of this, we have outraged the feelings of the community by attacks, unjust and unnecessarily severe, on its most valued institutions, and gratified our spleen by indiscriminate abuse of leading men, who were often honest in their intentions, however mistaken in their views;—that we have utterly neglected the ample means that lay around us to convert the nation, submitted to no discipline, formed no plan, been guided by no foresight, but hurried on in childish, reckless, blind, and hot-headed zeal,—bigots in the narrowness of our views, and fanatics in our blind fury of invective."

tive and malignant judgment of other men's motives."

Do not these sound like the charges laid against De Leon and the S.L.P.? I say it would be practically impossible to distinguish between the dishonest or foolish charges made against De Leon, and those generally fired at the American Abolitionists!

Criticizing Wm. Lloyd Garrison for *his* unyielding insistence on principles, the English critic patronizingly said:

"We say, therefore, that 'uncompromising' policy is not to be measured by absolute justice, but by practical amelioration of the slave's condition. Amelioration as fast as you can get it—absolute justice as soon as you can reach it."

Again, how utterly familiar! In these few words are summed up, as it were, the criticism, the attacks, sneers and smug hypocrisy of all the critics and defamers of De Leon and the S.L.P.! We Marxists say: "There can be neither justice nor freedom for the workers under capitalism, and that reforms cannot ease their lot, wherefore capitalism must be destroyed!" Along come the "Socialist" party and the Communist party reformers—the "ameliorators" of today—and say to us: "Sure, we want working class emancipation, but that's not the issue now, and uncompromising policy is not to be measured by demands for the unconditional surrender of capitalism, but by practical amelioration of the condition of the wage slave, and practical reforms to improve his lot now. Amelioration as fast as you can get it [they scream at us]—complete working class emancipation as soon as you can reach it"—which, they add, won't be until "far, far into the dis-

tant future"! (Browder.) If the Abolitionists had listened to the "reformers," the "ameliorators," the "conciliators," slavery might still be with us unless it had meanwhile collapsed under its own weight, with the principle of slavery, however, left unsettled as such. If De Leon had listened to such counsel, if we were to heed it today, capitalism (in whatever hideous and monstrous form) may be with us for ages—unless it, too, should collapse under its own iniquity—and possibly drag all civilization down with it!

III.

In a very special sense De Leon's struggle during his many years of activity in the Socialist movement was against compromise and opportunism. Arrayed against him were the hordes of hungry S.P. politicians whose sole aim was to escape the fate of the wage slaves, on whose backs, however, they were quite willing to ride to bourgeois glory, wealth and influence. Outstanding among his opponents were Hillquit, the lawyer; Berger, the swindling petty bourgeois politician; Ghent, the professional scribbler in quest of markets for his literary groceries; Spargo, the intellectual mountebank who craved large lecture audiences, and likewise markets for his literary canned goods, and whose chief avocation it now is to boost that economic Neanderthaler, Herbert Hoover! And there were, of course, the lesser lights who were satisfied with crumbs, i.e., the petty jobs which the S.P. could offer, and which were not available in the S.L.P. And besides, there were the S.L.P. renegades—those who deserted the Socialist Labor Party *after* the split, and whose moral turpitude was emphasized by the fact that they joined

hands with the very charlatans and crooks whom they had not long before denounced as such. Notorious among this latter contingent were such tail-wagging poodles as Algernon Lee, Ben Hanford, and (later) Frank Bohn, James Conolly, and many others. The crafty Hillquit (who amassed a fortune acting as lawyer for workers, and labor unions, in distress, and as a Wall Street speculator) was one of the first to discover that the uncompromising tactics of De Leon constituted "fanaticism," and he never failed to spew his venom at De Leon. But the worst offender, and also one of the crudest, was the aforesaid Ben Hanford who (to judge by his speeches) must have foamed at the mouth whenever he mentioned De Leon. De Leon's characterization of Ben Hanford will be remembered:

"Benjaminimum was so 'loyal' an S.L.P. man that a week before his defection he declared at a general Party meeting: 'Between my Union and the Party I choose the Party. (Applause from the credulous.) Never, never, shall I desert the Party. (Louder applause from the credulous.) I shall ever be seen on the soap box doing the Party's work. (Uproarious cheers from the credulous.) A week later he deserted, and was in the pay of the strike committee, and also at the *Volkszeitung* [the German Kangaroo organ] writing articles to the effect that 'De Leonistic tyranny was not to be endured, at all, at all.'"

A typical example of this villainous vituperation and vindictiveness we find in their speeches delivered at the 1908 S.P. convention, held at Chicago. In a long, rambling, slanderous tirade against the S. L. P., prompted by a proposal for unity between the S.L.P. and the S.P., Hanford revealed his slum-proletarian

character, and, of course, his intense hatred of De Leon. Said he: "If any member of the S.L.P. . . . wants to join our party, well and good. But I want nothing to do with Bill Sykes, the burglar; I want nothing to do and I want no communication with Jesse James, the train robber; I want nothing to do with Daniel De Leon, the union wrecker. . . . !"

It was this same Hanford who, at the 1904 S.P. convention, raving against the S. T. and L. A. and the S.L.P., shouted: "The working class, right or wrong—I don't care whether they are right or wrong," and who illustrated his lofty conception of the mission and tactics of the labor movement by declaring (in illiterate language that makes quoting difficult) that he wanted to be able to take the position that when any man opposed him (Hanford) from "the standpoint of the working class" (that is, his vulgar conception of what constituted "the standpoint of the working class"), he could, as he put it in his own words (and I am quoting him from the record), "throw a rock at him and knock his damn block off." Which civilized and elegant declaration, according to the stenographic record of the S.P. convention, was greeted with applause! I think we can all agree that any revolutionist should be proud of having such a creature for a mortal foe!

However, at the 1908 S.P. convention, Hillquit added his venom to that spewed by Hanford and others, though Hillquit's language was that of the crafty Jesuit, in oily phrases uttered by silken tongue, and with great unctuousness. Assuring the delegates that "if there is any man on the floor of this convention who has *personal* justification for bitterness against the S.L.P., it is no one more than your humble servant"—meaning, of course, Uriah Heep Hillquit! But im-

mediately thereafter he shifts from the S.L.P. to De Leon, saying: "And if there is any man in the Socialist party who has been so absolutely unjustly and maliciously abused by De Leon, then I would like to see him." And finally he assures his listeners that "when our passion and heat leave us, when we consider calmly that, with the exception of a sole, single individual, the rank and file of the S.L.P. is as devoted as our [S.P.] party membership!"

One can almost hear the sobbing of this noble, unselfish and self-sacrificing shyster, and one feels sure that crocodile tears streamed down his cheeks, just as if he were addressing the jury in defense of some grafting labor faker caught red-handed!

Despite the utterances of Hillquit and his faithful poodle, Hanford, two years later at Copenhagen the hypocritical and dishonest Hillquit said (on the floor of the International Congress):

"Comrade De Leon, if you are in earnest in what you say, if you really desire unity in the true spirit of Socialism in order to combat our common enemy, *then you are welcome, as you have always been, to our ranks*"!

And he added:

"And so I say to Comrade De Leon that if he is ready to throw aside all his unsocialistic fads [!] we will need no further [sic] conferences or conventions."

And Victor Berger, corner grocer politician *par excellence*, shouted on the congress floor that he and his party would promise "that within the next three years we will completely solve the unity question for by that time only De Leon himself will stand outside the par-

ty"! The Bergers were as poor in prophetic powers as they were in their "Soshulism"!

The unity conception of Hillquit the Jackal, accordingly, was to draw the teeth, and pare the claws, of De Leon the Lion, and to effect "unity" by placing the lion in a cage! The greatness of De Leon receives peculiar emphasis by contrasting him with these petty bourgeois swindlers.

However, the thing that interests us most now is the supreme confidence of these politicians that the S.L.P. was dying anyway, and that the S.P. was on the point of rising to great and permanent power. Hillquit assured his fellow-delegates that the only reason the S.L.P. "come to us as a last resort (is) because *they face annihilation as a party*." The incontestable fact that the S.L.P. submitted the question of unity to the S.P. convention primarily because the Stuttgart Congress of 1907 had instructed both the S.P. and S.L.P. to consider the possibility of unity was never once mentioned by either Hillquit or any of the rest of the political swindlers gathered in convention to devise new ways and means of lying more effectively than ever about Socialism! One of the outstanding political swindlers present, one Geo. Goebel of New Jersey, said: "Why is it that they [the S.L.P.] have gone down? Simply because their tactics and methods were not adapted to the needs of American Socialism. Why have we [the S.P.] gone up? Why have we developed strength and power [!]? Why have we got the ear of the trades unions? Why has our party press developed and our party membership grown? Because our tactics have been right; that is the reason."

Looking at the sorry thing that now calls itself the Socialist party, and over which now presides the ex-

Reverend Norman Thomas, these boastful claims present themselves as samples of first-class American humor! To be sure, for another eight or ten years the S.P. continued to "grow," via the same road of anti-Marxism, of anti-working class principles, the road of compromise, rank opportunism and political trading. Whatever element there might have been in the S.P., sincerely desiring Socialism, was crushed under the terrific pressure exerted by the S. P. officialdom, which, fatedly, was driven to force their party to the extreme and logical end of the road of working class treason. They were forced to do this because, for one thing, the S.L.P. and De Leon constituted a standing rebuke to the fakers. The Hillquits, Bergers, Spargos, Ghents, Lees and the rest of them could not, much as they would have liked to do so, ignore De Leon, under whose constant bombardment, directed through the *People*, they cowered! They *had* to justify their stand, they *had* to explain why tactics and policies were justified which were absolutely at war with the very heart and essence of the premises to which they pretended adherence. If De Leon thundered "No compromise of principle," they faintly echoed "no compromise," and proceeded immediately to demonstrate why their very abandonment of principle was no compromise! When De Leon exposed their crookedness, their duplicity, their financial swindles, and openly charged them, on the basis of incontrovertible proof, with being as unscrupulous a pirate crew as ever sailed the social seas, they answered fact with whispered, slanderous innuendo, with hints that De Leon was in the pay of Tammany Hall, and similar vile libels. The logic of their false premises, of their immoral practices, inevitably drove them more and more toward an open op-

position to Marxism, some of them—including such typical specimens as Victor Berger and Abe Cahan—unblushingly repudiating Marx, and glorying in so doing. And still De Leon thundered: "No compromise! Away with opportunism! Down with political trading and fake unionism!"

Obedient to the law of compromise and reform, the S.P. grew and grew—not as the thing it pretended to be, but, naturally, as the caricature of that thing, that is, as a caricature of a Party of Socialism. Nurtured on bourgeois principles, sustained by the spirit of compromise and duplicity, fattened by the bribes of office, of unscrupulous and practically unlimited commercialism, the S.P. grew strong—strong in the sense that the Populist movement had grown strong, strong in the sense that every false movement grows strong. It was the strength, not of a steel chain, carefully forged and linked together, but the strength of a rope of sand. It may be said that the numerical and material strength of the S.P. was in inverse ratio to the strength of its supposed Socialist principles, so that when it reached its peak in growth about 1912, whatever there had ever been of even a semblance of Socialism in the party, had reached the vanishing point. On the other hand, the stronger the S.P. grew numerically, the stronger the S.L.P. grew in point of principle, of clarity, and in determination and perseverance. The craven compromisers gloated over their success, sneering at the uncompromising De Leon, little knowing that they were facing the same situation that confronted Napoleon after the Battle of Waterloo, when he said: "All was not lost until the moment when all had succeeded."

IV.

For by 1912 the S.P. fakers and politicians were sure that they had succeeded, or that, at least, they were on the very eve of "success." According to the report of the National Secretary to the S.P. convention in 1912, the S.P. membership during the first quarter of the year was 125,826. I doubt that there is an actual enrolled membership of 826 today! The same report boasted five thousand locals in the country. I doubt that you could now locate five scores! The vote in 1912 was approximately one million, with no woman vote. In the 1917 mayoralty campaign Hillquit polled in New York City alone almost 150,000 votes, on the burning issue of milk at 5 cents the quart! And in 1932 his vote for mayor was around 250,000. In 1936 the S.P. national vote was about 187,000, and in the last (1938) election, the vote in the entire state of New York fell below the minimum required to qualify as an official party, the S.P. thus losing its place on the ballot. In Pennsylvania they likewise had lost their place on the ballot (as well as in many other states) and they only succeeded, through trickery, chicanery, and obvious favoritism by capitalist interests, to defeat the S.L.P. in its otherwise successful attempt to get on the ballot, the S.P. thus to the very last performing its function of an instrument of capitalist interests by preventing the genuine party of Socialism, as represented by the S.L.P., from reaching the workers of that state with the message of emancipation. According to the 1912 convention report, the S.P. then claimed a total of 1,039 elected officials throughout the country, including 2 state senators, 145 aldermen, 160 councilmen, 59 judicial officials, 155 school officials, 3 superintendents of "the deserving

poor," 56 mayors and 4 dog-catchers! The report further boasted approximately 325 periodicals, of which 13 were daily, and nearly 300 weekly. Today the official organ (fraudulently bearing the designation *The Socialist Call*) appears now and then as a four-page sheet, about the size of one of our Socialist Labor Party leaflets. And where are these votes, papers and members—where are the million of votes, the one-eighth million members, the more than one thousand elected officials, including the dog-catchers? Where are the hundreds of thousands of subscribers to S.P. papers and magazines? Where are the *New York Call*, the *Appeal to Reason* (sometimes called the Appeal to Treason, but more correctly designated the Appeal to Fakerism, Cupidity and Emotionalism!)? The corrupt Jewish *Forward* we still have with us, still under the nominal editorship of the unprincipled and unscrupulous Abe Cahan, and otherwise indistinguishable from the average run of petty capitalist rags! Where is the organ of the horny-handed S.P. contingent, the *International Socialist Review*, and where is the famous, or infamous, *Milwaukee Leader*, the latter the proud possession of the late Victor Berger? Alas! in the words of Francois Villon—

"...All enquiry will be vain
Of weeks or years where they repose;
No answer comes but this refrain:
'Ah, where, oh where, be the last year's
snows'?"

The career and finish of the *Milwaukee Leader* is in reality an epitome of all that is characteristic in S.P. corruption and compromise. Perhaps you remember how the sheet was born—De Leon told the story,

which is incorporated in the pamphlet "Daniel De Leon, Pioneer Socialist Editor." You will recall how the enterprising Victor Berger reported in detail the sensation created by the *Milwaukee Leader*, how the streets were blocked and how a stampede of the milling humanity was narrowly averted—and all this narrated five days before the paper appeared in print! Given such a start, and no one could possibly be in doubt as to the wind-up of the fraudulent thing. Well, then, the *Milwaukee Leader* has passed out of the control of the Bergerites (whatever may have been left of them) and is now controlled and directed by a group of Hearstian yellow journalists, though whether they incorporated on their own account, or on that of the unspeakable Hearst, is not known at this time. As an obituary and epitaph to a career of fraud and political swindling, a letter written by a Berger dupe to the new owners of Berger's old swindle sheet, serves beautifully that purpose. It follows:

"To the Editor:

"I've been away from home for several weeks and had to read the capitalist press, but I thought when I got home I'd get something worth while to read, and with eagerness I tore the wrapper off and found the *New Leader*, looked it over carefully, and in sorrow and disgust threw it in the wood box and went out behind the barn and shed a tear for Vic. Berger's *Milwaukee Leader*, and repeated several lines of the eulogy on the death of Hamilton, to wit: 'How are the mighty fallen.' And, 'Regardless as we are of the common deaths, shall not the fall of the mighty affect us?'

"And now, dear comrades, this is mighty hard to

do, but it is the only way I can express my contempt for these added features of cheap comic strips and sports when we are today living in the period of the parting of the ways and sorely need a Lincoln or a Debs or a Vic. Berger to lead us out of the wilderness.

"Yours in the spirit of Old Abe." [!]

This poor wretch, whose brains, as De Leon would say, had been gouged out by the Bergeries, rebels at an extra dose of the same dope fed him all these years, and begs for more of the poison in its cruder form!

A passing note in Upton Sinclair's autobiography (which is a choice example of megalomania and exhibitionism) serves as a commentary on the corruption, and corrupting influence upon the workers, of that monstrosity, the S.P. press. In his rambling, posturing style Sinclair writes:

"During these months at the colony [the "Helicon Hall" of freaks and future reactionaries, including the now Ultramontane editor of the *Commonweal*, Catholic organ, Michael Williams] I wrote 'The Industrial Republic,' a prophesy of Socialism in America. I have never reprinted this book because of the embarrassing fact that I prophesied Hearst as a radical president of the United States [!!]. He really looked like a radical then [!!], and I was too naive to imagine the depths of his cynicism and depravity."

And plaintively Mr. Sinclair adds:

"The world is even worse than I was able to realize, but I still cling to my faith in the methods of democracy"!

How touching—but at that time, you see, Sinclair

was trying to become governor of California! Asserting that the S.P. had never been able to publish a propaganda organ on a national scale, he writes:

"The 'Appeal to Reason' was a gift to them from a real estate speculator with a conscience, old J. A. Wayland. . . . 'Wilshire's Magazine' [of gold brick schemes fame] was a gift from a bill-board advertising man with a sense of humor. So long as his money lasted, we took his gift with thanks; if his gold-mining gamble [swindle is the word.—A.P.] had succeeded, we would all have made money, and had a still bigger magazine, and all would have been lovely."!

And it was these freaks, frauds, and common swindlers who constituted the opposition to De Leon! These wretches who knew nothing about Socialism, and cared less; these swine with their snouts in the capitalist pigsty, grubbing for a bit of property garbage; these gentry devoid of principles, and loaded down with iniquity and moral turpitude—*these* groundlings had the colossal effrontery to pretend to be teaching the workers Socialism, and to contend with the mighty De Leon on the high ground of principle; these ignoramuses who concocted "easy lessons in Socialism"; who devised short cuts to working class emancipation; who urged "one step at a time"; who insisted that "half a loaf is better than none"; who urged upon their dupes a "friendly" understanding of the personal troubles of the Rockefellers and Carnegies (whose hands were stained with working class blood)—these scoundrels whose only interest was to ride on the back of the workers, to make an easy living out of the movement—it was *they* who condemned De Leon for being fanatical, sectarian, "unsocialistic," uncompromising

and impractical! I am sure that there has never been in any former period a band of swindlers and cut-throats who perpetrated one-half the crimes against a despoiled class as did these scoundrels and political gangsters of the party which now, happily, has reached the end of its nearly forty years of crime, corruption and utter depravity! And rotten as is the Communist party, it still has not quite matched the record of the S.P.—partly because they have not had sufficient time to do so, and partly because, after all, you cannot fool all the workers all the time with the same baits and lures, and also, but not least importantly, because of the work of the intrepid, the fighting, the uncompromising light-bearer, Daniel De Leon.

V.

Again and again De Leon had thundered: There are no short cuts to the revolution! Compromise of principle inescapably spells compromise with capitalism, and treason to the working class! Compromise is the surest way to defeat, whatever be your momentary success! Numbers without knowledge and understanding amounts to a recruiting for the army of reaction! Better 3,000 strong than 3,000,000 weak!—And all history, and social science, attest that De Leon the Uncompromising was right, and that the politicians, of course, were wrong. And again and again De Leon would pound his fist for emphasis, and exclaim—at the very moment when the Socialist party had reached the summit of quantitative success—"The S.P. is *bound* to go down!" And down it has gone, to stay down, for its principle was false, its very implied premise of revolution (as far as mere words may constitute a premise) being completely at war with its performance and

actual program! At the moment the miserable remnant of the boastful "Socialist" party is trying to find a hole into which it may crawl, and according to reports that hole will probably be the still more corrupt and reactionary "American Labor party." The ex-Reverend Norman Thomas himself stated dolefully in his little sheetlet the other day: "...I expected a very low....vote in New York. It was a little [!] lower than I expected...." Well, had it been just a "little lower" still, there wouldn't have been any vote! Ruefully the ex-parson sighs: "We cannot continue primarily as a campaign [political] organization, functioning at the polls in competition with the A.L.P." That's what that other fraudulent outfit, the legitimate offspring of S.P. reformism, the "Communist party," also thought, and so it withdrew all but a few candidates here and there throughout the country, in favor of old party politicians, many of them among the most reactionary or corrupt. If the Communist party is more Utopian, if it is anti-Marxist and anti-working class to a greater degree than the mother-organization (the S.P.), it is so because that is the logic of the situation—or one might say that it is the logic of reformism. As De Leon said in a speech delivered at Arlington Hall in New York City, on March 7, 1911:

"The effect [of S.P. fake or Utopian propaganda] is to bring much sentiment into the Socialist and Labor movement, eventually turning these S.P. leaders into reactionaries, for, as Marx warned us, the father of reaction is Utopianism."

Both reform groups (the outstanding distinction of each being its obvious anti-Marxism, and its avowed anti-De Leonism) are competing for the favor of the

very fake Labor party which a few years ago both denounced. Moreover, the S.P. split a few years ago on the question of "Communism" and Labor partyism, one faction (the "Old Guard") accusing the Thomasites of illicit relations with communism, while the Thomasites accused the "Old Guard" of having sold out to Democratic and Labor party politicians! And now all three groups meet on the holy ground of the Farleyized American Labor party, whose candidate for governor was the immensely wealthy banker, Lehman! A member of the plutocracy being the candidate of so-called Communists and Socialists on one of the most reactionary platforms conceivable! There was never much difference between the S.P. and the C.P., both being fake reform parties. The main difference used to be that the one pleaded for reforms to the accompaniment of incitements to violent insurrection, while the other, also pleading for reforms, held to more or less respectable parliamentary language. Now, however, they are so alike in everything that one wonders why they do not merge into one body. I am reminded here of a story by Lincoln. "I remember," said Lincoln, "being once much amused at seeing two particularly intoxicated men engaged in a fight with their great coats on, which fight, after a long and rather harmless contest, ended in each having fought himself out of his own coat and into that of the other"! I think it might be said that the S.P. and C.P. have fought themselves into each other's coats, which were pretty much alike to begin with!

The Socialist party and its child (and all their little simpering by-blows in or skirting the political arena) have, as a matter of course, abandoned the ground of the class struggle, though they still pay lip-service to

it, much as the harlot tearfully sobs about the glory of girlish virtue. Speaking of the freakish and fraudulent schemes of the reformers and would-be revolutionists of his day, Marx wrote to Engels in 1865:

“The logic of things will speak. But the honor of the workers’ party demands that it should reject fancy pictures of this kind *even before their hollowness is exposed by experience*. THE WORKING CLASS IS REVOLUTIONARY OR IT IS NOTHING.”

And as the elder Liebknecht said:

“The harm of a compromise does not consist in the danger of a formal selling-out or sidetracking of party principles. . . . The danger and root of the evil . . . lies in giving up, keeping in the background or forgetting the *class struggle basis, for this is the source of the whole modern labor movement*. . . . Whoever fails to understand this or thinks that the class struggle is a dead issue, or that class antagonisms are gradually being effaced, stands upon the basis of bourgeois philosophy. . . . We are only strong when we stand alone. . . .” And to the tune of his ringing “No compromise, no political trading,” the old warrior exclaimed: “Either the bourgeoisie still has political vitality—in which case they do not need our help; or they do not have it, and in that case our help would be useless. Can we be expected to make an alliance with a corpse?”

Evidently the S.P. and the C.P. politicians have decided “to make an alliance with a corpse”—the “remains” of bourgeois democracy! So far, indeed, have these fake “labor” politicians drifted even from their pretense of accepting the class struggle, that Browder,

amazing clown that he is, in a recent issue of the *Daily Worker* (November 5, 1938) denounced as reactionaries those who insisted on independent working class political action! Chanting: “As we march to the polls to cast our ballots for progress and democracy” (“progress and democracy” being represented by Banker Lehman, his Tammany Hall allies, and Farley-ized capitalist politics of the lowest order), the incredibly brazen and corrupt Communist party Fuehrer exhorts: “All together, to win Illinois and the nation for a real New Deal,” identifying this new deal, of course, with President Roosevelt!

Again we say, this is the fruit of 38 years of compromise, of opportunism, a fruit forecast from the very beginning by that master mind, Daniel De Leon the Uncompromising. De Leon knew, of course, that compromises of principles meant abandonment of principles, or, as Lincoln put it: “Compromises of principles break of their own weight.” The dictionary definition of compromise is: “An arrangement for settlement by mutual concession.” That is precisely the record of De Leon’s enemies in the S.P. reform camp—a record of surrender, of conceding ground to the exploiters of the working class, though it should be said that the old S.P. politicians never did so in a manner so unblushing as that which characterizes their successors, the Fosters and Browders.

It should be clear, however, that it was not De Leon’s function or purpose to save the S.P. politicians, or to stop them from wandering into the plutocratic camp. Had that been his purpose and mission, his life would certainly have been a failure. What concerned De Leon was to formulate and establish definite principles, and the S.P. politicians and other fakers were

simply so many guinea pigs in his sociological laboratory. In attacking, exposing and cataloguing the fakers in the labor movement, De Leon accomplished a four-fold purpose: (1) He "isolated" the Anarcho-Bourgeois "microbe"; (2) he showed the falsity of the contentions of the "short-cutters to revolution"; (3) with these as a "horrible example" he demonstrated to the workers the correct principles, tactics and forms of organizations; and (4) blazed the trail generally for the American Marxian revolutionist, and left an indelible record to serve as an unfailing guide to those who earnestly and seriously labor to translate the lofty Marxian theory into the glorious reality which we call the Socialist Industrial Republic of Labor. He taught us many priceless lessons and showed us that "the proletarian revolution abhors forms"; that it "is relentlessly logical"; that reforms are opiates, or sops, and that "palliatives are palliations of Wrong"; that the proletarian revolution carries with it its own code of legality; that it is "irreverent," that is, that it spurns the cloak of ruling class sanctity which the compromisers like to throw around the proletarian or working class movement; that it is "self-reliant"; that it spurns sops; that the proletarian revolution is "impelled and held together by reason, not rhetoric"; that it does not practise duplicity, or deal in double sense; and finally *that the proletarian revolution is a character-builder*. Just as a tree is known by its fruit, so revolutionary, or would-be revolutionary, organizations are known by the type of characters they develop. A glance at the swindling and lying S.P. and C.P. gentry, the zig-zagging shamsters to whom compromise and double-dealing are the very breath of life, and we understand what De Leon meant, and to what ends he was working. On

the other hand, the S.L.P. stalwart represents the fruit of uncompromising De Leonism—strong, self-reliant, fearless and effective—because his weapons are those of truth, of relevant facts, of decency and of proletarian morality. The former must inevitably fail, and just as inevitably the latter will emerge, crowned with victory! Compromise spells failure and death; unswerving adherence to principle spells ultimate success and the life triumphant!

VI.

There is a particularly obnoxious and repulsive element among us, an element that one would like to brand prominently with a mark which clearly proclaims them as traitors, renegades and anti-De Leonists. There are many of them, and they are essentially alike, although they may differ in minor respects. It would be profitable to catalogue them, supplying case histories to the more prominent ones. However, there is time tonight for dealing with only one of these hypocritical renegades who, despite their crimes against De Leonism, have the indecency of acclaiming the uncompromising De Leon, of identifying themselves with him, thereby hoping to conceal, or gloss over, their corruption and treason to the S.L.P. The cataloguing of the gentleman is long overdue. I have reference to one of our outstanding labor fakers whose name, however, does not often appear in the public prints. I speak of the ex-S.L.P. member, the ex-S.L.P. editor and ex-S.L.P. N.E.C. member, Joseph Schlossberg, anti-De Leonist and disrupter, now high-salaried General Secretary of one of the several political kite-tails of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. In addition to his job as Gen-

eral Secretary, Mr. Schlossberg has received recognition at the hands of that astute capitalist politician, "Little Flower" La Guardia, who graciously "honored" him by appointing him a member of "the Board of Higher [Hired?] Education." Recently he ran for Congress on the ticket of—yes, you've guessed it!—of Banker Lehman's American Labor (Faker) party in New York State! He was defeated — perhaps he didn't put his heart into the fight—perhaps the ghost of De Leon rose to plague the renegade—perhaps he was just put on the millionaire banker's ticket to help catch the gudgeons! One cannot be sure. However, Mr. Schlossberg was expelled from the S.L.P. in 1917 for supporting the enemies of the S.L.P. and for conspiring to disrupt the S.L.P. and sell out to the S.P. He has ever since boasted that he never joined another political party—until recently, that is, when he landed in the capitalist reform outfit, the A.L.P. A few years ago Mr. Schlossberg published in book form (or some one caused to be published) a number of articles written by him, semi-autobiographical, and more or less reminiscent in character. In several of these he refers to his past association with the S.L.P., and particularly with De Leon. Basking in reflected glory, but manifesting a rather bad conscience, the ex-S.L.P. editor, etc., comments repeatedly on De Leon, contriving to slander and vilify him, though he does so in terms of would-be adulation mingled with pretended pity and compassion for "poor, old De Leon"! I want to record (in order to etch deeper the uncompromising character of De Leon) a few of these comments here, and to refute one or two particularly offensive and revoltingly false statements he makes about De Leon. I quote briefly, reserving for a future occasion a more

extended reproduction of Mr. Schlossberg's insults, misrepresentations and condescensions. "De Leon," he writes, "saw clearly the direction which American labor must take in order to achieve its liberation. And he called upon the working class to follow that road. He called, *and they answered with abuse*. That disillusioned him and hurt him terribly. . . ."! Mr. Schlossberg manages to work in two contemptible falsehoods in this brief space. It is a stupid lie that the working class "answered with abuse." It was not the working class, but the fakers and swindlers in the movement who abused De Leon—as did also, of course, the handful of S.L.P. renegades who were either inherently vicious, or who became corrupted by Mr. Schlossberg's present pals, the S.P. fakers. It is a slander to say De Leon was disillusioned—if the imputation came from an honest source one might say that it is a stupid assertion. This "disillusionment" business recurs in Mr. Schlossberg's comments on De Leon. Psychoanalysts might find an explanation for the recurrence of a mendacity so obviously stupid!

Speaking of the 1899 split, Schlossberg tells us that it "proved fatal" to the S.L.P. Fatal? For seventeen years after "the split," the gentleman remained a member of the S.L.P. which, he said, was dislodged by the S.P.! Yet, the S.L.P. is going stronger than ever, while the S.P. is bankrupt and now practically dead! Fatal, indeed, but not to the S.L.P.! Mr. Schlossberg reveals a profound secret: He says that "De Leon loved the working class with all the blind love of absolute faith."! "Blind love"—"absolute faith"! This seems too imbecile to be possible! Again, we are told that the split in 1899 "had a crushing effect on De Leon personally." This is pure humbug, and surely known to the slander-

ous renegade to be such. "De Leon's last years were tragic," he says. "He was forsaken and abused by men in whom he had trust. . . ." "De Leon died a sad and lonely man." And so forth. There can be only one answer to these studied insults flung at the great De Leon by this miserable traitor: "Mendacious fool!"

Of the Socialist Labor Party, Schlossberg says: "The Socialist Labor Party is now a small group, little known in the labor movement, and with no influence." Wouldn't the renegades and labor fakers wish that were true! But he goes on with this revolting bit of cant: "The unselfish devotion of this group to the cause of Socialism is deserving of greater success." Well, S.L.P. success would spell Mr. Schlossberg's finish as labor faker!

We now come to the most contemptible and lying statement of this renegade. He says that De Leon was called to speak at strike meetings in 1913, but he is careful not to give particulars. However, in a footnote he expands upon the matter, saying:

"That must have been a comfort to the old man a year before his death, considering his isolation and his painful disillusionment. De Leon realized his errors [!]. And the people whom he had built up and elevated in the Party deserted and abused him cruelly when he began to look like a loser [!]. Some time after I accepted the Secretaryship of the New York Clothing Workers' organization I visited De Leon at his office. He was a depressed and lonely man [Liar!]. Speaking of my new activities, he said to me: 'I just want to know one thing—do you feel that the results justify your having taken the office?' [In other

words, De Leon is supposed to have asked this budding labor faker if the end justified the means!] When I answered in the affirmative, he said: 'That's enough for me; I am satisfied.' [One should think it *would* be enough for De Leon—he had witnessed other S.L.P. renegades blooming out as labor fakers!] De Leon made every possible effort to re-unite the Socialist movement [?]. He would have given his life to bring that about. But the Socialist Party leaders were afraid of him. Victor Berger told me many years later that he was afraid that De Leon would capture and break the Socialist Party if he were allowed to come in. He was wrong, and I told him so. Berger was deeply interested in what I told him. DeLeon of the unity period was not the De Leon of 1899. In 1899 both he and his opponents were convinced that a split in the party was desirable [!] and they got it. The older De Leon knew better. [Yes, he *knew* better in the sense that more than a decade of experience had confirmed his analysis of the S.P. and the corrupt officialdom and established the indisputable fact they were even more corrupt than seemed the case at the time of "the split"!] He was sincere in working for Socialist unity. [Sincere, yes, in the true sense, not in the corrupted Schlossberg sense.] I know whereof I speak. I have always believed that his failure [?] hastened his death. De Leon was a great Socialist, but a poor psychologist, for which fault both he and the movement paid dearly [!]."

I have read many slanderous and vilifying references to De Leon, but none exceeds the foregoing in falsehood and vilification. To deny the mass of falsehoods categorically is the obvious thing to do. To

think that it was "a comfort to the old man" to speak at a few of the budding labor faker Schlossberg's strike meetings! It is a foolish and lying thing to say that De Leon "realized his errors," with the implication that De Leon recanted! So little did De Leon realize "his errors" that in that very year (1913) he disowned his eldest son for turning against the very things which De Leon is supposed to have recognized as errors.

While this is not the time, nor the proper occasion, to relate the story of De Leon's break with his son—a story, however, that some day will be told in full, and in the preliminary events of which I had a conspicuous part, a digression at this point seems justified in order to expose briefly the methods usually employed by the S.P. fakers and charlatans who presumed to judge and appraise De Leon and his place in the revolutionary labor movement of America. This incidental exposure will concern itself briefly with the distortions and falsifications perpetrated by one of the later S.P. "historians," a gossip female, one Lillian Symes, who, in collaboration with one Travers Clement, has written one of those worthless would-be summaries of the American "radical" movement—a book highly seasoned to sell—viz., "Rebel America." With characteristic flippancy, and with complete disregard of the truth and the facts, this precious S.P. *historicus vulgaris* writes about the break between Daniel De Leon and his son as follows:

"He [De Leon] was, perhaps, the 'purest' scientist of revolutionary Marxism the world has ever known. Nothing in his life so well illustrates De Leon's intellectual implacability as his break with his beloved eldest

son, Solon, many years later! The young man had been trained by his father in the service of the party. *But one day he had the temerity to disagree with the elder De Leon regarding the exact fraction of the product of labor taken from it as surplus value. He was virtually disowned.* Despite the staggering blow to his affection and intellectual pride WHEN SOLON JOINED THE HATED SOCIALIST PARTY, De Leon showed no outward sign of dismay. 'David had his Absolom,' was his only comment."

This vulgar, stupidly false account of the causes that led De Leon to disown (not "virtually" disown) his eldest son is so thoroughly characteristic of the training imparted to the devotees of the Hillquit brand of "Socialism," so thoroughly characteristic of the things practised in the S.P. by the oncoming generation of the Hillquit school of "historians" and "Marxists"—of the swindling S.P. politician, in short—that it belongs in this sketch to complete, or, at least to illumine further, the forces which were called into the field to combat the sound Marxian movement which De Leon was building—building slowly, perhaps, but with the utmost care and on the impregnable ground of Marxian science, and with a decent regard for the facts, the truth and common honesty.

De Leon did not disown his son because of a disagreement "regarding the exact fraction of the product of labor taken from it as surplus value." The cause of the break was the younger De Leon's espousal of out-and-out bourgeois reform proposals and movements. *The initial attack was directed against the correctness and soundness of the Law of Value.* In his attack on the Law of Value, and on basic Marxian economics,

young De Leon was joined by another S.L.P. member, one Charles H. Chase, who (as a result of his Columbia University association) had swallowed the vulgar hash (miscalled political economy) dished out at Columbia—the hash served up by the type of “economists” referred to by Marx as belonging to the *species vulgaris*. Instinctively, or otherwise, they sought to buttress, or justify, their reform propaganda as members of the S.L.P. by going straight for the rock foundation on which rests the Socialist movement, with the demonstrated soundness or falsity of which that movement must stand or fall, the Rock of Gibraltar of working class emancipation, the Law of Value, and Marxian economics generally.

This is something else than the imbecile or crooked contention of Symes and Co. that the principle at issue was a mere disagreement on the degree of exploitation practised on the working class by the capitalist class. To my best knowledge and recollection the question of the degree of exploitation was never even so much as touched upon in the discussions between father and son. (It may be added, parenthetically, however, that in the post-De Leon period of the S.L.P., reformers and disrupters and renegades repeatedly have challenged, as a pretext for fomenting trouble within the Party, the Marxist contentions of De Leon and the S.L.P. that labor (as a class) is robbed of at least four-fifths or more of its social product, so that today the “degree of exploitation” issue has become almost the unfailing sign of incipient disruption, or potential treason against the embattled Marxian S.L.P.!) The fact is that young De Leon’s challenge of Marxian economics inescapably raised the question of the moral right, and logical justification, for maintaining the Socialist Labor Party as

a political party, and, in a deeper personal sense, raised the question as to whether De Leon was, and had been all along, fundamentally wrong, and whether, accordingly, De Leon had wasted nearly thirty years of his life. These questions were at issue, and not the wholly incidental and, in given circumstances, debatable question of the “exact fraction of the product of labor taken from it as surplus value.” De Leon’s position in relation to his son was identical to that of Benjamin Franklin in relation to *his* eldest son, William, who, as is well known, turned Tory, betrayed the confidence reposed in him by the noble Franklin, and sold out to the British Crown, being rewarded for his treason by being pensioned for life to the tune of 800 pounds per annum, voted him, as one Franklin biographer put it, “by an appreciative government.” What Benjamin Franklin said about his son’s treason De Leon could have said, and in substance *did* say, about his son’s betrayal of Marxian principles, and, therefore, betrayal of the working class. Said Franklin: “. . . nothing has ever hurt me so much and affected me with such keen sensations as to find myself deserted in my old age by my only son; and not only deserted, but to find him taking up arms against me in a cause wherein my good fame, fortune, and life were all at stake.” One can imagine a contemporary Lillian Symes commenting on this somewhat as follows: “So implacable was Benjamin Franklin that he disowned his only son because the young man one day had the temerity to attack the cause of the colonists and to throw his lot in with the British Crown—a mere academic difference of opinion on a question of no particular importance!”

As for “the staggering blow” delivered to De Leon’s “affection and intellectual pride,” when young

De Leon supposedly joined the Socialist party—well, the kindest thing one can say about this bit of “history” is that Miss Symes’s imagination ran riot! De Leon died in May, 1914. His son (who made common cause with Schlossberg, Reinstein, Katz and the rest of the anti-De Leonists) was expelled from the Party in 1918. He may have joined the S.P. shortly thereafter (he did so eventually), but certainly not before 1918!

And thus stands exposed another S.P. humbug, another S.P. “historian” of the well known Hillquit-Schlossberg school, another falsifier of De Leon’s life and works, another De Leon-hater whose conceptions of honesty and decency may be judged (and summed up, as it were) by the comment she herself makes on another gabby female, the notorious Emma Goldman. Says Miss Symes of Emma Goldman: “She was a thoroughly honest woman who could believe most implicitly whatever she wanted to believe.” This is what one might designate honesty in a strictly Pickwickian sense! Miss Symes’s honesty may be gauged by her heroic effort to believe”!*

However, to resume our narrative:

When Mr. Schlossberg quotes De Leon in implied support of Schlossberg’s elevation to fakerdom in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, he lies shamefully, with appalling disregard, not only of the facts, but of the known views and character of De Leon, and of his emphatic repudiation of Jesuitism. If De Leon said to Schlossberg (as quoted by him), “That’s enough for me,” then that could have meant one thing, and one thing only: that De Leon was satisfied that Schlossberg had entered upon a career of

*See Appendix, page 73.

labor fakerism, and that as an S.L.P. man Schlossberg was finished. Mr. Schlossberg was a pal of the plotting unity monger, Boris Reinstein, who in the main shared the views of Schlossberg. In 1913 and 1914 De Leon repudiated Reinstein, and had De Leon lived he would most certainly have taken steps to rid the S.L.P. of such traitors as Schlossberg and Reinstein. It is obvious that the conscience of Schlossberg bothered him a bit. Having become a labor faker, he had to invent this stupid lie in order to soothe his conscience—if that sort of thing were possible!

Schlossberg knowingly misstates the facts again when he says that De Leon ardently favored unity. De Leon was faithful, however, to the obligations imposed upon him and the Party by the International Socialist Congress and Bureau which had laid upon both parties the duty of seeking a common basis for unity. There was, however, only one such basis, and that was Industrial Unionism—not “industrial unionism” in the abstract, but an actual, functioning union, however undeveloped, as, for instance, the pre-1908 I.W.W. That this was De Leon’s view we know. In the work “Daniel De Leon: The Man and His Work” there is reprinted an extract from a letter written in 1908 by De Leon to a member in California. I quote: “The I.W.W. is smashed, upon that we seem to agree. The supposed basis for unity is knocked out. . . .” The basis for unity being “knocked out,” obviously there could, in logic, be no unity. Hence, De Leon could, as he did in 1909, condemn unqualifiedly the S.P. as a “bourgeois concern,” and enjoin upon the Party membership to “clear the deck for action,” and urge that the unity question be definitely closed. It was not his fault or wish that it was kept open, to the grave in-

jury of the S.L.P. We have the Reinstens, Katzes and Schlossbergs to thank for that.

VII.

As I said before, the case of Schlossberg furnishes an excellent opportunity for emphasizing the uncompromising posture of De Leon. For in the craven, compromising, job-hungry, fat-salary-itching Schlossberg we witness everything that De Leon was not. We may suppose that Schlossberg at one time was sincere and devoted to the principles of De Leonism—at least as much of them as he understood. One of my impressions of the gentleman is his coming before the Party's N.E.C. Sub-Committee (of which I was then a member) about 1911, begging that further credit might be extended to the Yiddish S.L.P. paper, *Der Arbeiter*, which he edited. The paper owed a very large amount to the Party's printing plant, and, further credit being denied, the paper shortly thereafter "went down," as Schlossberg puts it in his "memoirs." It was shortly thereafter that he must have decided to become a labor faker, and from then on he developed more and more in that direction. As De Leon put it: "All these men who have gone to the dogs gave promise of better things. There is in all of them some good that was useful in the movement. Unfortunately the evil prevailed—and what caused it to prevail is that greatest fatality of all: the existence of a party that calls itself 'Socialist,' that the capitalist press finds its account in booming, that thereby is in a condition to fill the public eye and ear, and thereby cause its debauchery of Socialism to pass for Socialism, *at least to be accepted as such by crookdom.*"

It was in 1917 that Schlossberg, by his treason to the Socialist Labor Party, proved the wisdom of De Leon's words just quoted. With lying unction he says in his "memoirs" that he was expelled from the S.L.P. "because of a comradely letter which I had written to Algernon Lee of the Socialist party in reply to a similar comradely letter from him." The "letter" was an appeal (addressed to the members of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers), published in the official organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, *The Advance*, to vote for one of the two parties of Socialism, but with the obvious implication that they should vote for the S.P., whose politicians apparently thought they had a chance to elect Hillquit mayor of New York. And who was Algernon Lee? An S.L.P. renegade from the days of "the split," who had been elected New York City alderman, and who later voted for the "Victory Arch" bearing the names of famous battlefields where American soldiers had supposedly distinguished themselves. One of these battlefields (inscribed as trophies, as it were) was *Murmansk*! This man Lee had voted to glorify the invasion of the Russian Workers' Republic, and it was he to whom Schlossberg wrote "a comradely letter," and with whom he is now "comradely" associated in the New York American Labor (Faker) party!

But Mr. Schlossberg had "made the grade"—he was an established labor faker, enjoying a fat salary. I am told the gentleman now "earns" a salary of \$7,500 plus a similar amount for "expenses." In effect this means, I suppose, that he has at his command an "income" equivalent to \$15,000 a year. This, then, is his reward for betraying De Leonism. And yet he has the effrontery to speak of De Leon as his teacher—

he received his training, he said, "under the rigid schoolmastership of Daniel De Leon"! Marx, in his "Eighteenth Brumaire," facetiously remarks: "Thus did the Tories of England long fancy that they were enthusiastic for the Kingdom, the Church and the beauties of the old English constitution, until the day of danger wrung from them the admission that their enthusiasm was only for *Ground Rent*."! Thus we may say of the Schlossbergs that they fancy themselves enthusiastic about De Leon, and the knowledge they gained through him, when in reality their enthusiasm is only for the fat salaries and royalties they may draw through employing that knowledge in the service of capitalism and pro-capitalist fake unionism! For Mr. Schlossberg's union is today one of the pillars of that Temple of Class Concord, the C.I.O., which is also the most perfect example to date of the fascist corporate state in the making in America. Contrast the fat salaries of the Schlossbergs, Lewises, Greens, etc., with De Leon's reward for remaining true to himself and his principles. This is illustrated in a letter sent out to "members and friends of the Socialist Labor Party" in the spring of 1910 by the then National Secretary, Paul Augustine, appealing for funds *to pay De Leon for back wages due him*. The Party was poor—poorer, by far, than it has ever been since then. I quote this illuminating passage from this letter:

"In some cases, these arrearages in wages were, under the circumstances, unavoidably accumulating during many years and have reached alarming proportions, and thus the largest of them all—that due to Comrade Daniel De Leon—is now in the neighborhood of \$3,000.

"Comrade De Leon is one of those employees of

the Party, who practically never received in full even the moderate wage due to him for his work; who never complained when the manager—being short of cash to meet the payroll—reduced the usual portion in his envelope still further; with whom the manager had no trouble and who, even when in most urgent need of money, quietly accepted what was given him, taking it for granted that the manager was doing the best he could and that there was no ground for complaint."

The letter goes on to explain the natural result (on De Leon and his family) of this failure to pay De Leon what was due him, at the same time quoting De Leon as ridiculing the idea that he was being ill-used, and also points to the fact that De Leon refused to accept pay for translations, lecturing, etc., which, the letter says, he denounced "as graft," expected and accepted, of course, in the Socialist party, but unthinkable in the S.L.P. A typical instance of De Leon's uncompromising attitude in this latter respect is found in a letter written the N.E.C. of the Party early in March, 1899, by one Evalenko, head of the old "International Publishing Co.," which letter I quote in full:

"In consideration of the literary work of Comrade Daniel De Leon generously bestowed upon the edition of a publication I have brought about, I have tendered him a remuneration of fifteen dollars (\$15). He, however, declined to accept the recompense for any labor he confers on socialistic literature.

"But being a representative of private enterprise, I do not consider it morally right to profit by the magnanimity of socialists. I, therefore, submit the fifteen dollars (\$15) to you for the benefit of the Socialist Labor Party.

"I would suggest that it be left to the discretion of Comrade Daniel De Leon as to the character of the fund."

Contrast, again, this with the conduct of the Schlossbergs, et al., accepting fat salaries from organizations made up of poorly paid, exploited workers! Contrast it with the compromising grafters and boodlers in the S.P., with the millionaire Hillquit and his kind! Contrast it with the Gomperses, the Greens, the Lewises, etc., with their enormous salaries, plus! And one begins to understand the greatness, the utter selflessness, and magnificent devotion to principle, of the uncompromising De Leon.

Goaded, it would appear, by the innuendos of one of his then fellow-members, De Leon on January 8, 1902, made this revealing statement:

"In view of what X has just said, I wish to place on record the fact that since July, 1900, I have not received \$25 a week. Since November, 1900, the salary I have been getting was \$15.00 a week; before that, since the starting of the *People*, my salary was about \$10.00 a week, and for two weeks I got \$5.00 each week."

And as late as January, 1914 (four months before he died), we find De Leon writing as follows to the then state secretary of the New York S.L.P.:

"Much as I regret it, I am unable to give you a date now, or a future one with any chances of my being able to keep it.

"You will have noticed from numerous Letter Box answers that I find myself without time to respond, as I used to before, to the calls for dates.

"The 'performance' of low wages, and even these not paid in the past, to an extent that there is a considerable arrearage due me—that performance has lasted too long for my own financial powers to resist this strain. The consequence has been that I have had to look elsewhere for revenue. Such sources are limited, seeing that I will not write for magazines on Socialist subjects. What with that and with the imperative necessity of not allowing my work on *The People* to suffer, I find my time taken, up to the handle. The consequence is that I find myself deprived of the luxury which I used to indulge in until recently—the luxury of putting on additional steam and do the extra work of speaking out of town.

"Things may improve. Shall be only too glad to let you know when they do."

(Whatever back wages were due De Leon were finally, and in full, paid to Mrs. De Leon two or three years after De Leon's death.)

One can only regret the tragedy of De Leon's personal hardships and sufferings, and yet, things and circumstances being what they were, there was probably little or nothing that could have been done at the time. And in this respect, as in so many others, we are again struck with the startling parallels in the lives and experiences of De Leon and Marx. In a letter to one S. Meyer, a German-American Socialist, dated April 30, 1867, Marx writes:

"Why I never answered you? Because I was perpetually hovering on the verge of the grave. Therefore I had to use *every* moment in which I was capable of work in order that I might finish the task to which I have sacrificed my health, my happiness in life and

my family. I hope this explanation requires no further supplement. I laugh at the so-called 'practical' men and their wisdom. If one chose to be an ox one could of course turn one's back on the agonies of mankind and look after one's own skin. But I should really have regarded myself as *unpractical* if I had pegged out without completely finishing my book, at least in manuscript."

The nobility of mind reflected in this letter, and the utter contempt expressed for worldly success and personal comforts, find their exact counterparts in De Leon's life and work. To compromise principles for the sake of monetary reward would have meant to De Leon what it meant to Marx: to throw his life away; it would have meant to reach for baubles and let go of the life of intellectual and moral riches; it would have meant to barter integrity and self-respect for the glittering stuff which in the end turns to dross in palsied hands. It would have meant to commit treason—not merely against the workers and their cause, but, above all, it would have meant to commit treason against himself. For, as the poet has said—

"—Still as of old
Man by himself is priced.
For thirty pieces sold
Himself, not Christ."

VIII.

Everything in life is relative, and so is the importance and significance of men, as Dean Swift underscored when he made Gulliver a Lilliputian among the Brobdingnagians, and a Brobdingnagian among the

Lilliputians. And so, in appraising De Leon's life and work we come back again and again to the midgets and dwarfish intellects who fought him throughout his life. And once again, as a strong contrast against which to measure De Leon, we think of that sordid figure and vulgar *poseur*, the Lilliputian Hillquit, to whom the labor movement was a mere means of financial success, and a source of gratifying his personal vanity. De Leon, being human, naturally resented the slanders and calumnies heaped upon him by the enemies of Socialism, and yet he cared less about the effect upon himself than he did about the effect upon the movement. In a bitter moment De Leon had formulated charges against one Waldinger (a "Kangaroo" supporter) for slandering him. As De Leon said in these charges:

"This slander against my good name has not been brought upon me by any private act of mine. The wounds that the slander has inflicted and continues to inflict are earned by me in the camp of the Party, owing to my activity in the Party's work."

It would have been human if De Leon had yielded to the impulse of self-pity, or personal anger and personal revenge, and to have exclaimed, with Shakespeare:

"Who steals my purse steals trash; . . .
But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him
And makes me poor indeed."

But this was no mere personal matter, subject for individualistic action, or self-commiseration. For obvious reasons De Leon could not seek redress through the courts, and so he placed the matter where it be-

longed, that is, before the Party for action—"the only court," he said, "that need not be trammelled with legal technicalities, above all, the only court that must have a deep interest in establishing whether or not a member whom it entrusts with grave responsibilities is a nameless adventurer of shady antecedents, and, finally, a court that must also be deeply interested in doing for its own sake what it can in defending those of its own members who, by reason of the work imposed upon them, are exposed to the poisonous arrows of an infamous foe...."

It was the Party, above all else, that mattered. And when De Leon spoke of himself and the great cause to which he gave his life, the question with him was not primarily: "What has the Party meant to me?" but, "What have I done to serve the Party?" In a speech delivered by Hillquit in 1932 (in the course of which he, incidentally, asserted that the "Socialist party is getting a new lease of life" (!) and that "Its membership, vote and political influence are again in the ascendant [!]"), the millionaire lawyer and Wall Street speculator asked himself if his activity in the S.P. had been "worth while." And with an eye, no doubt, to his bank account, to his luxurious home, to his many plutocratic friends, and his position as a sensible bourgeois "socialist," so recognized by capitalist interests, he answered his own question enthusiastically in the affirmative! Sure, it had been "worth while"! And he concluded by saying that to him what *he* called the Socialist movement "has been the best that life has had to offer." There spoke the vain bourgeois individualist, who interprets the movement in terms of his own personal likes and dislikes, and not himself in terms of

the movement. Dying in the odor of capitalist sanctity, praised by the foremost capitalist exploiters and politicians, from President Roosevelt, arch-traitor and imperialist poodle Ramsay MacDonald, Banker-Governor Lehman, the notorious Samuel Untermyer, and all the way down the line, Hillquit was the perfect representative of what Frederick Engels called "bourgeois Socialism." To the extent Hillquit met with opposition at all from the camp of capitalism, it was the kind referred to by Marx when he spoke of the top-bourgeoisie "persecuting as *Socialist* what formerly it had celebrated as *Liberal*...." Hillquit was, in the language of that rather unusual New York mayor, William J. Gaynor, "a man of vast and varied misinformation, of brilliant mental incapacity, and of prodigious moral requirements!"

How entirely different with De Leon! He was, to the capitalist class and their representatives, a strange bird whom they could not understand and reason with; whose firmness of character, integrity of purpose, and uncompromising hatred of class rule, class oppression and of usurpation, they could only describe as the "corrosive acids of dogmatic narrowness and hatred." Whereas Hillquit had no compunction about compromising his principles (if any) for temporary gain, De Leon stood unyielding. Hillquit, the "stage-socialist," used by the capitalist class for exhibition purposes, was shifting and zig-zagging, *for* one thing today, *against* it tomorrow, but always acclaiming bourgeois principles and methods, always opposing those of Marxism. De Leon, steadfast, anchored to principle, guided by what served to promote the cause of the revolutionary proletariat, lived his life consistently,

being true to himself and that cause. He measured completely up to the demand voiced by Ibsen through his character "Brand":

"Be not one thing today, and borrow
Some other semblance for tomorrow.
That which thou art, be wholly it,
Not piecemeal—and from bit to bit."

With De Leon it was, as he himself said of Marx, "a case of a clear intellect coupled to uncompromising rectitude." De Leon took his place in the front of the battle-line, heeding not the danger, nor the consequences to himself. With Ibsen's hero he could say:

"They who fight in the front ranks must be prepared to fall in the great cause. He who does not risk all, let him lay down his sword before the battle begins. The banner which is defended by weak wills is as good as conquered by the foe. And he that is frightened at the thought of the risk, bears the mark of death even before he is struck."

De Leon's life was as rich and infinite in its nobility and utility as that of the most characteristic of his vulgar foes was barren and infinite in its sordidness and utter futility. Those who sought to frustrate De Leon's life and work, we behold as very monuments of frustration and utter futility.

We are passing through stirring times. The old order of capitalism is crumbling, and *that* is happening which De Leon predicted a generation and longer ago. Capitalism is rapidly sinking into the dark night of industrial feudalism, the workers as yet standing helpless—helpless, because they have failed to apply the principles of De Leonism, because as yet they have

failed to organize their potential economic might. The unspeakable savagery and bestiality of the Nazi perverts, and of the Italian and Japanese bandits, is not merely the result of evil men being in power. The evil men (and evil they are in the most loathsome sense of the word)—the evil men are a result, not a cause. The bankruptcy of the so-called democratic bourgeoisie is attested by their explanations of the present social anarchy and barbarism. The rotten fruit, they say in effect, is not the result of overripeness. Oh, no, it is the evil work of horticulturists who insist that ripe fruit should be picked and disposed of as nature intended it, and who further insist on pruning the tree, and cater to it according to its nature! We Marxists, who years ago foretold that this very condition which we are now facing would inevitably come as the result of the logical working out of the laws of capitalism, and who urged the taking of proper measures in order that the social birthpangs might be shortened and lessened—we Marxists are being blamed for the presence of ultra-reaction in the world today! The latest to utter this stupidity is that blatant demagogue, the ranting, foul-mouthed priest, Coughlin, who, as reported in the press, hypocritically urged a stand "against Nazism, against Communism from which it sprang." What the howling, slanderous priest means is that Nazism or Fascism (the very thing he is fostering in this country) sprang from Marxian Socialism! Arrogantly stupid as the priest may be, he is not quite so stupid as to believe that. What he really wants to do is to convert his fellow Catholics to his point of view—that is, to make them all consciously Ultramontane, to the end that the "Church Militant" may in the future serve industrial feudalism as effectively as it served medieval

feudalism. De Leon anticipated, and forecast this situation. It was De Leon who revived the use of the term applied to political Roman Catholicism, the term Ultramontaniam, which he gave a fresh application. Ultramontaniam, as you know, is the term that expresses the insatiable thirst of the Catholic hierarchy for temporal power. The craving for overlordship in mundane matters, the claims to rule the conduct of the individual, and to dictate the policies of political rulers and ruled; their covering with the threadbare religious cloak matters pertaining to economics, the arts and sciences, all outside the field of religion — all this presumptuousness on the part of a body that calls itself religious is relentlessly logical from the false and ultra-reactionary premises of the Ultramontane hierarchy, as De Leon demonstrated with irrefutable facts and invincible logic. Ultramontaniam, through the writings and speeches of De Leon, has been analyzed and catalogued, and mercilessly laid bare, by De Leon, as no reactionary politico-economic doctrine was ever catalogued and defined before. Parenthetically, it is amusing to reflect for a moment on the appalling ignorance among the anarcho-communists, even on the subject of Ultramontaniam. Old-timers in the S.L.P. and the early I.W.W. will remember a character by the name of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. Ignorant and bombastic, but glib-tongued, she became notorious as an anarcho-syndicalist, and naturally later took to anarcho-communism as a duck takes to water. This lady (who in time will no doubt succeed "Mother" Bloor as "Mother" Flynn when the former passes on to her reward)—La Flynn, in an article in the Sunday *Worker* a few months ago, in which she viciously attacked De Leon, while praising the Jesuitical James Connolly,

learnedly confides to her trusting readers that "Ultra Montanism" was "an ascetic Christian Sect of the 2nd Century"!

How right De Leon was in his analysis of Ultramontaniam, and how justified he was in his uncompromising exposure of it, received fresh confirmation only a few days ago. You probably read in the press about the Post Office mural in the Bronx, which was savagely attacked as "irreligious" and an "insult to Christianity" by another limb of Ultramontaniam, the Jesuit Ignatius W. Cox, who is supposed to teach ethics at Fordham University. The mural portrays the beloved American poet, Walt Whitman, sitting before a blackboard, pointing to some lines written thereon. These are the lines (and Whitman's own):

"Brain of the new world! What a task is thine!
To formulate the Modern out of the
Peerless grandeur of the Modern
Out of thyself—comprising science to recast
Poems, Churches, Art
(Recast—maybe discard them—end them—
maybe their work is done, who knows?)
By vision, hand, conception, on the background
of the mighty past, the dead,
To limn with absolute faith the mighty living
present."

And this the reverend gentleman has the effrontery to denounce as an insult to Christianity! The Jesuit Father refers to the mural as a portrayal of a teacher [!] seated at a desk, teaching the "class" skepticism and "irreligion," which in the further interpretation of the priest becomes instruction in "Bolshevism of the Russian Asiatic type, and Nazism of the European

type. . . .” In fairness to Father Cox it may be taken for granted that he knew neither who the “teacher” was, nor who was the author of the beautiful lines. Had he known it was Whitman, he might possibly have avoided making such an arrogant ass of himself. But ignorance is the hallmark of all “red baiters” and witch-hunters, as we have also recently observed from another quarter, the notorious Dies committee, which found itself in a state of excitement at the supposed presence of a malignant, subversive bolshevist, one Christopher Marlowe who, however, died more than 300 years ago, and who wrote poetry some of whose immortal lines challenge the finest in Shakespeare. But just as good old Walt became a bolshevist in the eyes of the reactionary Ultramontane, so dashing “Kit” Marlowe became a lurching bolshevist in the eyes of the incredible witch-hunting committee at Washington!

The prelati cal arrogance and stupidity of the Ultramontane organization are on a par with the arrogance and stupidity of the Nazi gangsters, both of them recrudescences of darkest medievalism, emerged out of the black hell of the middle ages to bask for a brief hour in the sunlight of our modern day. There is but one force capable of combatting these twin evils, these cousins of stark reaction: the working class, united and organized on the principles of uncompromising Marxian De Leonism. Organized in a political party of their own class; organized in revolutionary Industrial Unions, to take over the management of society on a civilized basis, the workers will drive reactionary Ultramontane priestly arrogance, and reactionary savage Nazi gangsterism, back into the darkness whence they came, and with them the evil thing that called forth both—degenerate capitalism—and sweep

the earth clear and clean of autocrats, dictators and priestly impudence!

Capitalism is doomed. It cannot, and shall not, be preserved. In the weapons forged by the uncompromising De Leon, we possess the means with which to put an end to it, and with it all the ills of the ages. In commemorating De Leon’s birth let us remember above all that in the edifice of the Workers’ Industrial Union Government, soon to be raised on the ruins of capitalism, De Leon has himself built his own lasting memorial. De Leon could with justice have said of this memorial soon-to-be, what the ancient Roman poet said of his immortal works:

“I have raised a monument more enduring than one of brass, and loftier than the pyramids of kings: a monument which shall not be destroyed by the consuming rain, nor by the mad rage of the north wind, nor by the countless years and flight of ages.”

Daniel De Leon—Educator

If one were to sum up De Leon's capacities and qualifications in one word, that word would be "Educator." For, universal as was his genius, and many-sided as were his activities, they all stemmed from that primary vocation of his—teacher, educator. And they all in the end merged into that one grand endeavor — *education*. And by education is not meant that formal process which terminates in the affixing of certain letters to a name—the education which Emerson referred to as having been "taxed with a want of truth and nature." Of that education, and the students partaking of it, Emerson also said: "We are students of words: we are shut up in schools and colleges, and recitation-rooms, for ten or fifteen years, and come out at last with a bag of wind, a memory of words, and do not know a thing. . . . In a hundred high schools and colleges, this warfare against common sense still goes on. Four, or six, or ten years the pupil is parsing Greek and Latin, and as soon as he leaves the University, as it is ludicrously styled, he shuts these books for the last time."

If it be objected that Emerson, after all, lived and wrote a long time ago, and that things are ordered better now, just look around and observe the results of modern education. With notable exceptions the net result as a whole is a prevalence of what might be called

cultured ignorance. Ignorance by itself is bad enough, but cultured ignorance is hopeless and insufferable. Those afflicted with it are like people stalking in swamps, following now this, now that will-o'-the-wisp. They are blinded utterly to the realities of the age, and yet they deem themselves exceedingly wise and practical. They obstruct the work of those who see the way out and, besides, waste their individual lives (which is to say that they are wasting everything which man, in the final analysis, possesses) in nourishing illusory hopes and in making futile attempts at blowing fetid breath into the collapsing lungs of a dying social organism.

Emerson's indictment of educational standards and methods holds today as much as when he made it. A humorous illustration is found in a poem which I came across recently. A young college-bred woman soliloquizes on the theme, "Ain't Education Grand?", saying in part:

"In College days I studied Greek and Latin composition;
Three modern languages I speak, which is some acquisition.
In Calculus I was a star, in History a whiz;
In Economics I stood high—I led in every quiz.
At Chemistry, Psychology, Zoology and Art,
Philosophy and English, too, I worked with all my heart.
I studied all the planets that whiz about the sky.
Not any subject in the course did I omit to try."

Then the young woman married, thus fulfilling her destiny according to bourgeois standards — that is, in accordance with the requirements of capitalism. She recites some of the uses to which she put her so-called

education, while her white collar wage slave husband placed the fruits of *his* "education" on the altar of profit, and she concludes:

"I fry some chops, I slice some bread, and quickly set the table,

When dinner's done I sneak to bed as soon as I am able.
Then round my head I seem to see my college credits stand—

Derisive ghosts that grin at me — ain't education grand?"

That is what education under capitalism trained this young woman for, but even so it may be argued that she was less to be pitied or condemned than the male or female educational product who prostituted his or her talents, and such knowledge as was picked up in college, in the interests of the capitalist robber barons and their labor-skinning social system!

No, this sort of "education" is not what we have in mind when we refer to De Leon as "Educator." By education in the De Leonist sense, in the modern, usefully social sense, is meant, first of all, the acquiring of ability to think independently, the ability to make proper appraisal of relevant facts, and the power of understanding their relation to ourselves and the society in which we live. This implies less of the routine knowledge of history in general, for example, or of the sciences in general, and far more of information concerning, say, the springs of history, and the laws of motion of society, and to apply the knowledge thus gained to the problems which we are called upon to solve. Thus it is of far greater importance to a wage worker to know what social institutions preceded ours, what were their reasons for being, and why they yielded to other,

and presumably superior, social forms, than it is for him to be able to chant the particulars of Caesar's Gallic War in Latin—"Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres. . . .," etc. It is of more vital significance to the modern wage worker to understand the law of value, or at least its implications and practical application, than it is for him to be able to rattle off the succession of English kings, or to discourse learnedly on the significance of the battle of Marathon, and the first, second and third Punic wars, etc., etc.

There is, indeed, "education" and education. Artemus Ward's genius penetrated to the heart of the matter in his sketch, "Soliloquy of a Low Thief," where the difference between "high" and "low" education is demonstrated by one result — "high" and "low" thievery. This is the soliloquy of the "uneducated" Jim Griggins who bemoaned his lack of "eddycation," as reported by Artemus Ward:

"SOLILOQUY OF A LOW THIEF.

"My name is Jim Griggins. I'm a low thief. My parients was ignorant folks, and as poor as the shadder of a bean pole. My advantages for gettin' a eddycation was exceedin limited. I growed up in the street, quite loose and permiskis, you see, and took to vice because I had nothing else to take to, and because nobody had never given me a sight at virtue.

"I'm in the penitentiary. I was sent here onct before for priggin' a watch. I served out my time, and now I'm here agin, this time for stealin' a few insignificant clothes.

"I shall always blame my parients for not eddycatin' me. Had I bin liberally eddycated I could, with

my brilliant native talents, have bin a big thief — I b'leeve they call 'em defaulters. Instead of confining myself to priggin' clothes, watches, spoons and sich like, I could have plundered princely sums—thousands and hundreds of thousands of dollars—and that old humbug, the law, wouldn't have harmed a hair of my head! For, you see, I should be smart enough to get elected State Treasurer, or have something to do with Banks or Railroads, and perhaps a little of both. Then, you see, I could ride in my carriage, live in a big house with a free stun frunt, drive a fast team, and drink as much gin and sugar as I wanted. A investigation might be made, and some of the noosepapers might come down on me heavy, but what the d——I would I care about that, havin' previously taken precious good care of the stolen money? Besides, my 'party' would swear stout that I was as innersunt as the new-born babe, and a great many people would wink very pleasant, and say, 'Well, Gribbins understands what he's 'bout, he does!'

"But havin' no eddycation, I'm only a low thief—a stealer of watches and spoons and sich—a low wretch, anyhow—and the Law puts me through without mercy.

"It's all right, I s'pose, and yet I sometimes think it's wery hard to be shut up here, a wearin checkered clothes, a livin' on cold vittles, a sleepin' on iron beds, a lookin' out upon the world through iron musketeer bars, and poundin' stun like a galley slave, day after day, week after week, and year after year, while my brother thieves (for to speak candid, there's no difference between a thief and a defaulter, except that the latter is forty times wuss) who have stolen thousands of dollars to my one cent, are walkin' out there in the bright sunshine—dressed up to kill, new clothes upon their backs and piles of gold in their pockets! But the Law don't

tech 'em. They are too big game for the Law to shoot at. It's as much as the Law can do to take care of us ignorant thieves.

"Who said there was no difference 'tween tweedledum and tweedledee? He lied in his throat, like a villain as he was! I tell ye there's a tremendous difference.

"Oh that I had been liberally eddycated!

"JIM GRIGGINS.

"Sing-Sing, 1860."

The higher education to which Jim Griggins aspired is the cleverness and nimble-mindedness designedly resulting from formal, bourgeois educational methods, though, to be sure, not every one thus trained turns out a marauding banker, a thieving oil magnate, or what have you, any more than the "poorly educated" ones necessarily turn out Jim Grigginses.

President Nicholas Murray Butler, of Columbia University, has been publicly quoted as follows:

"An educated proletariat is a constant source of disturbance and danger to any nation."

President Butler has not repudiated the utterance attributed to him, nor withdrawn it, and we may freely assume that he said it, and that he meant precisely what he said. A properly educated proletariat would, indeed, be a menace to the Butlers and the capitalist society by which they are enabled to live useless lives in luxury.

The Butlers would undoubtedly like nothing better than to produce a race of robots, whose wants would be few, whose obedience would be mechanical and who would possess "minds" so constituted that such "alien" notions as the right to enjoy in full the fruits of their

labor, and to exercise freedom with affluence, would never enter them—the type of mind illustrated in the story of the farmer who had suffered a stroke supposedly affecting his mentality. When asked how he was getting along, he said: “Waal, I sit here on the porch, and rock and rock, and I feel all right. They say I lost my mind, but I ain’t missed it none.”

Incidentally, that story is credited to a college professor which adds point to its use here. For regardless of the low mental status to which they may desire to reduce the workers, the fact remains that the average capitalist college professor possesses the quality of mind that would make it impossible for him to miss it even if he lost it!

De Leon, himself a Columbia man, overcame the baneful effects of bourgeois education, succeeding in putting to good purpose that which may be really worth while in it, while rejecting its philosophy, and the more or less avowed purpose of that education. In dedicating himself as a teacher of the working class, as an educator of a suppressed class destined to become the new “ruling” class, he fulfilled in his person the demands placed upon all true educators. The works of De Leon, published and unpublished, constitute a university of knowledge and wisdom of far greater value than anything capable of being imparted by the “great” Columbia University which he quit—the Columbia now ruled by the plutocratic Butler, significantly named Nicholas!

Unwittingly or otherwise (but mostly otherwise), the Butlers train students to take their places in capitalist society as social marauders, as industrial robber barons, or at least as apologists and defenders of these and their robber system. Consciously, and at great

personal material sacrifice, De Leon spent his life in training men to qualify as useful workers in a society of free men. Above all, he gave his life to teach the exploited wage slaves how to organize to achieve freedom from capitalist slavery, thereby enabling society and civilization to move onward. Patiently, brilliantly, with profound understanding and insight, he exposed the falsity of the teachings of the capitalist professors, tore off their masks of pretended learning and scholarship, reducing them to their real status of sycophants and servitors of property interests. A notable example of his achievements in this respect is found in his collection of essays entitled “Marxian Science and the Colleges.” There are thousands more essays of similar or equal importance, which lie buried in the files of the DAILY and WEEKLY PEOPLE—“buried treasure” in a sense very real to the movement of working class emancipation. The day will come when this treasure will be recovered, and given its proper use and setting. When that day comes, De Leon will not merely be recognized as De Leon, the great Socialist agitator, or propagandist; he will not merely be De Leon, the Socialist editor, the Socialist fighter. He will, above all, be denominated—

DANIEL DE LEON,
THE GREAT EDUCATOR.

Daniel De Leon Character Builder

Eighty-five years ago this year, on December 14, Daniel De Leon was born. It was Emerson who said: "Beware when the great God lets loose a thinker on this planet." And, indeed, the year 1852 was characterized by turmoil and convulsions such as the Ancients were fond of describing in their myths when a mighty spirit appeared on earth. In France the upstart Louis Napoleon (the vicious and corrupt clown who then had the part now played by the bandit-clown team Hitler-Mussolini) had proclaimed himself absolute ruler of France at an annual "salary" of 12,000,000 francs, while "granting" a lump sum of 80,000,000 francs for "public works" wherewith to "occupy" the laboring millions of France! In Austria the emperor definitely "liquidated" the recent revolution by total abolition of trial by jury. In Germany there were seething and discontent, with the then Baron Bismarck negotiating important treaties with Austria that led to a strengthening of the German Zollverein (tariff union) which, in turn, prepared the way for fulfilling Bismarck's dream, the unification of the German "Vaterland." In South Africa British imperialism carried the Rod of Empire to the benighted Kaffirs and other "heathens," while in China wild rebellion reared its head, fomented by Christian commercialism, Japan still sleeping the sleep of centuries. In the Argentine civil war raged.

In England the charlatan Lord Palmerston raised the scare of French invasion, succeeding in increasing the country's military powers, while a new star in the political firmament, Benjamin Disraeli, writing in March of 1852, hopefully expressed the desire "to put an end to the class struggle which in recent years has had such a harmful effect on the well-being of this kingdom," which statement prompted Frederick Engels to say (in a letter to Marx): "With old Wellington has been buried not only the common sense of old England but old England itself, in the person of its sole surviving representative. What remains are inconsequent sporting characters like Derby and Jewish swindlers like Disraeli. . . ." In that year also armed vessels were sent to the North American coast to "talk turkey" to the Americans who disputed the British claims anent the Newfoundland fishing grounds, the United States responding by also sending a war vessel to the scene of dispute. The world of 1852 was truly a fitting scene for the entrance of a mighty thinker, even as it witnessed the exit of many who had achieved fame of one sort or another. For in that year of De Leon's birth there died the great Russian novelist, Nicholas Gogol, the great educator, Froebel (the father of the "kindergarten" idea), and the great tragedian, Junius Brutus Booth. And in that year died also the "Irish Minstrel," Tom Moore, and those "giants" of American politics and oratory, Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, while England's Wellington, the "Iron Duke," passed from this troubled scene three months to the day before Daniel De Leon entered it. Thus it seemed not only as if a stage of turmoil and conflict was being set for De Leon's entrance into the world, but also as if nature chose that very year to settle its accounts, and

close its books, with many who gave color, tone and direction to the capitalist society on which De Leon was to wage relentless war later. And one gains an enlarged perspective in thus linking together, chronologically speaking, the names of such men as Wellington, et al., who aided mightily in establishing and consolidating the system of capitalism, and the name of the greatest foe of capitalism on this continent, Daniel De Leon. The enlarged perspective supplies one (especially one who knew De Leon personally) with a sense akin to contemporaneity with these great names and events that seem otherwise to belong to such a long dead past.

Much has been said and written about De Leon's contributions to social science, and especially his outstanding contribution (or addition, to quote Lenin) to Marxian thought, Industrial Unionism, with its logical and inseparable counterpart, Socialist Industrial Union Government. And much has been said about his application of Marxism to such questions as reform vs. revolution, taxation, the modern plebs leader (the labor faker, whether of the old time variety *a la* Gompers-Green, or the newer and slicker type, the Sidney Hillman-Schlossberg-Lewis variety), the class struggle, race hatreds and religious prejudices, Ultramontanism, anarchism, etc. All these questions were dealt with by De Leon uncompromisingly, and on the basis of a thorough knowledge and sound understanding of all the relevant facts and factors involved. But, above all, De Leon insisted on treating the questions with accuracy, to *quote* accurately, to get his facts straight, to exercise the most painstaking care in employment of statistics, illustrations and similes. The S.L.P. press, De Leon insisted, must be the repository of true Marx-

ian science and of incontestable facts, even as it must be the fighting weapon of the proletariat—the steely blade of true, tested and unbreakable metal. “Be sure you are right, then go ahead,” was the admonition he repeated again and again.

As Editor of the Party's official organ for nearly twenty-five years he practised every precept he preached. To make the DAILY and WEEKLY PEOPLE (as well as the Party itself) invulnerable to the foe's attacks was his great aim—an aim he achieved magnificently. He wanted to make it possible for friend and foe alike to say (or acknowledge)—“If you see it in the PEOPLE, it is so”—and he desired to inspire, by his example, the same passion for accuracy and care in the members of the Party who had to conduct the battle in the field. Few, indeed, were the occasions when serious error could be pointed to in the PEOPLE, but if on rare occasion errors crept into its columns (De Leon, being human, was neither infallible, nor omnipresent), he was as insistent on making honest and straightforward correction as he would be on practising accuracy in general. Deficiency in the handling of facts, in the use of quotations, and in recording the source and date of quotations, he would denounce as sloppy conduct, as inexcusable carelessness, and as mental laziness, where these, of course, were not the consequence of crooked design, lack of intellectual integrity, or unwillingness to face the facts. He knew that lack of knowledge would at times cause impatient or ambitious and egotistical individuals rashly to assume that something was thus and so, in order to “get by” easily—and these attempts to “get by” were invariably made to the accompaniment of smooth-sounding words and glittering phrases. And so, to him, sound

knowledge was absolutely wedded to care and exactitude. But since sound and useful knowledge must begin with carefulness, he would ever and again insist: "Facts, Facts, and Facts." The great American so much admired by De Leon, the sturdy Benjamin Franklin, somewhere says: "Carelessness does more harm than want of knowledge." There is, indeed, much truth in that.

In his unrelenting insistence on truth, facts and accuracy, De Leon developed *characters*. To him who loves truth, to him who practises accuracy, to the one who perceives the glow and beauty of *relevant fact*, there comes a potency which brings out and fortifies that rare quality called character. For although it is true, as Emerson said, that "No change of circumstances can repair a defect of character," it is also true that undeveloped character may be nurtured and quickened into efflorescence in properly fertilized soil. And the inculcation of love of truth, of facts, of accuracy, constitutes precisely such fertilization. "Every man," someone once said, "has in himself a continent of undiscovered character."

A twofold achievement was De Leon's as a result of his insistence on accuracy, on facts and truth: He rendered the Party and its official organ invulnerable, and he produced characters. And in achieving the one *and* the other, he created foes. There is no hatred greater than the impotent hatred toward him who, with facts, proves wrong an adversary of inferior character and ability. And the making of characters in a society resting on slavery, corruption and falsehood, is an unforgivable sin to the beneficiaries of such a society. The Englishman spoke true words who said: "The man that makes a character makes foes." As

De Leon himself so well put it (in his magnificent decalogue, "Ten Canons of the Proletarian Revolution"):

"The proletarian organization that means to be tributary to the large army of proletarian emancipation cannot too strenuously guard against aught that may tend to debauch its membership. It must be intent upon promoting the character and moral fibre of the mass. Characterfulness is a distinctive mark of the Proletarian Revolution."

No greater tribute can be paid the great De Leon than to pursue the course laid out by him, and imitate his example of strict adherence to truth, facts and accuracy. The struggle is ardent, the foe hydra-headed, and his victims as yet easily imposed upon, and difficult of access by the truth-bearer. But ardent as may be the struggle, tenuous and crafty as may be the foe, and misinformed and misled as may be the worker, there is no short-cut to revolution. There is but one road, the road pioneered by De Leon—the road of uncompromising revolutionary political action, and Socialist integral Industrial Unionism. Whatever else may be in doubt in this confused and dark world of decadent capitalism, there is no doubt to the intelligent student of social science that the road to working class power, the road to social and industrial freedom, is the road charted by De Leon. Social systems, like other organic bodies, are slow of growth, but in the fulness of time they dissolve speedily. And so it may be said similarly about the growth of the working class revolutionary movement: It is slow of *organizational* growth but at the psychologically right moment, it will resolve itself speedily into the executioner of capitalism, and

into the architect of the Socialist structure of Industrial Union Government.

Laboring incessantly, yet awaiting the proper moment patiently, the Socialist Labor Party pursues undaunted the course mapped out by Daniel De Leon, driving home to the workers fact upon fact, lesson after lesson, truth upon truth, and, by so doing, rendering him just tribute and doing him honor. To serve the cause as he served it—loyally, tirelessly and patiently—is to rise to full manhood and womanhood at a time when corruption and compromise once again momentarily are in the ascendancy in the so-called labor movement. And so we say now, as De Leon said long ago:

“Retrace your steps, ye who would overthrow capitalism, and impatiently seek for short-cuts and by-paths. There is no short-cut, there are no by-paths available. There is but one route. It is the broad and sunlit avenue cut and paved by the bourgeois himself, for the politically united and industrially organized proletariat.”

And we add, as De Leon would say were he alive on this his 85th natal day: No tinkering with capitalism, no compromise with the exploiting class, no bartering of principles, no trimming of sails! But one thought fills us, but one desire motivates us, the thought and the desire that—

CAPITALISM MUST BE DESTROYED.

APPENDIX.

The fact that Miss Symes is not alone in misrepresenting the facts concerning De Leon's life and work, nor the only one to spread stupid and fantastic stories about him, does not, of course, relieve the lady of the onus resting upon falsifiers, nor should for that reason the contempt be spared her which properly is visited upon slanderers and mendacious scribblers generally. An example of an even more stupid misrepresentation of De Leon is found in *Harpers Magazine* for March, 1939. A nonentity, one George R. Leighton, writing ostensibly on the city of Seattle, Washington, devotes a considerable part of his article to a discussion of the I.W.W. (and the “Wobblies,” to use his own term) in the course of which he comments on the first convention of the original I.W.W. held in Chicago in 1905, and on the leading delegates to that convention. Says Mr. Leighton:

“Father Hagerty, a priest who preached industrial unionism, was with them *and so was the elegant and dandified Daniel De Leon, formerly a lecturer in Latin American Diplomacy at Columbia and thereafter the leader of the Socialist Labor party.* [Italics mine.—A.P.] But the most influential of all were the delegates—chief among them one-eyed Bill Haywood—of the Western Federation of Miners.”

One would have to search far and wide to find anything to match this concoction of a stupid, false and shoddy literary cocktail! De Leon, “elegant and dandified”! De Leon, in his old, shiny coat, baggy trousers, collarless, although wearing a spotlessly white handkerchief around his neck—De Leon (neat and clean, but indifferent as to his apparel) “elegant and

dandified"! Mr. Leighton may perhaps understand how foolishly false his description of De Leon is when I say that "elegant and dandified" would apply more correctly to Abraham Lincoln or Walt Whitman than to De Leon!

De Leon was not a former lecturer "in Latin American Diplomacy at Columbia"! He held a prize lectureship at Columbia University for two successive terms, 1883-1889. The lectureship was in the Department of International Law. Upon graduating from Columbia in 1878, De Leon had received two prizes—one for \$100 for the best essay on "Constitutional History and Constitutional Law," and one for \$50 for the best essay on "International Law." (See "Daniel De Leon, Pioneer Socialist Editor," by Arnold Petersen, New York Labor News Co., 1931.)

Mr. Leighton's statement that "the most influential of all were the delegates... of the Western Federation of Miners" will find no acceptance among historians of the I.W.W. Already at the next convention in 1906 the complaint was loudly made that De Leon and his fellow-delegates from the "Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance" had succeeded in capturing or dominating completely the 1905 convention—that the I.W.W. for that reason had become a mere annex of the S.L.P., etc., etc. With the truth or falsity of this we are not here concerned, but the complaint, and the subsequent conspiracy and revolt of the anarchists and reformers, inside and outside the I.W.W., against what they called "De Leonism," amply refutes Mr. Leighton's erroneous contention.

Elsewhere in his article Mr. Leighton speaks about "De Leon and his round-the-radical-evening-lamp circle, the German immigrant socialists with their well-

thumbed Marxian texts...." This silly, sneering observation is a worthy pendant to the one quoted and dissected above. There was nothing "round-the-radical-evening-lamp circle" about De Leon and the Socialist Labor Party membership in general. If there had been, for one thing, the plutocrats and their labor lieutenants and bell-wether reformers (and "jackass reporters," to quote De Leon) would have paid no attention to De Leon. Nor can De Leon be identified with what Mr. Leighton sneeringly calls "The German immigrant socialists." If Mr. Leighton knew his stuff, he would know that it was De Leon who, in the early nineties, cleansed the Socialist movement of "evening-lamp circle" "Sozialismus" (the "lager-beer Sozialismus" of the eighties and early nineties), for doing which he earned the hatred of the so-called "German immigrant socialists." He would further know that Marx was anathema with the so-called "German immigrant socialists," who were much more likely to be found thumbing Lassallean "texts," or the tomes of radical bourgeois writers, than the scientific works of Marx and Engels—that is, if they were not otherwise occupied with organizing "Death and Benefit" societies ("Kranken-Kassen"), or guzzling beer in Yorkville or in Hoboken! There were, to be sure, German immigrant Socialists who were serious students of Marx, but by 1905 they had long since joined De Leon in breaking away from (even if they did not entirely succeed in breaking up) the "charmed circle" of "Alte-Genossen Sozialisten," and adapting themselves to the "American way of life" *a la* the Socialist Labor Party of post-1900 days!

If Mr. Leighton respects his calling (?) as a writer, and, above all, if he respects facts and the truth, he

would do well to acquaint himself with the history of the Socialist and Labor Movement of America. Apart from the works published by the Socialist Labor Party, Mr. Leighton is advised to study carefully Professor Paul F. Brissenden's "Launching of the I.W.W.," and the same author's more mature and exhaustive study "The I.W.W., A Study of American Syndicalism." He may then be spared future humiliating experiences of being exposed as a charlatan and shoddy scribbler.

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By Israel Zangwill

I.

In him the elements are strangely blent—

Two consciences he hath, two hearts, two souls,
On double wrongs and errors he is bent,
And ne'er appears except in dual roles.

II.

He hears both sides, but 'tis with different ears;
Sees both sides of the shield—with different eyes;
Between two rights with nice precision steers,
This double-headed king of compromise.

III.

Not his to hold the scales of life and death—
Not his, this nebulous invertebrate,
Who heeds and scorns at once the vulgar breath,
Nor knows the fixity which stamps the great,

IV.

The kingly souls with instinct for the right,
Vibrant to conscience and her trumpet call,
With clarity of vision, inward light,
And strength to follow out their thought through all.

